

REMARKS

Non-elected claims 34-36 have been cancelled herein without prejudice to filing such claims in divisional applications. Claims 13, 14, 26, and 37 have also been cancelled without prejudice to filing such claims in continuation applications.

In the Office Action dated September 8, 2003, the drawings were objected to; claim 20 was objected to; claims 1-3, 7-9, 13, 14, 18, 21-26, and 28-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 over U.S. Patent No. 4,450,912 (Callihan); claims 1, 2, 7-9, 17-20, 22-26, and 29-33 were rejected under § 102 over U.S. Patent No. 2,079,830 (Baker); claim 37 was rejected under § 102 over U.S. Patent No. 5,806,614 (Nelson) or U.S. Patent No. 4,396,075 (Wood).

Applicant acknowledges the indication that claims 4-6, 10-12, 16, 27-38, and 39 were objected to but were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. In response, Applicant has amended claims 4, 10, 15, 16, 27, and 38 into independent form. The scope of each of these claims remains *unchanged or has been broadened*. The scope of claim 15 has been broadened by deleting the word "one" in line 15 of the claim.

As amended, claim 1 is allowable over either Callihan or Baker. Neither Callihan nor Baker discloses a flow conduit extending from a body of a cementing tool and adapted to engage a fluid channel of a guide shoe, where the flow conduit channels cement flow through the guide shoe to the annular region outside a casing assembly.

Therefore, claim 1 is allowable over either Callihan or Baker.

Independent claim 22 is allowable over Callihan or Baker because neither of the references discloses a method of cementing a casing assembly that comprises providing a plug ahead of cement slurry into the cementing tool (with the plug having a rupture element) and rupturing the rupture element in the plug to enable the cement slurry to flow through the plug.

Newly added independent claim 42 is also allowable over the cited references, which fails to disclose a system having a casing assembly with a guide shoe, and a cementing tool that has a flow conduit extending from the body to engage the fluid channel of the guide shoe.

All dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as corresponding independent claims.

OBJECTION TO THE DRAWINGS

The stated objection to the drawings appears to be incomplete in the Office Action. The first sentence of the objection to the drawings does not appear to have an ending (*see* 9/8/03 Office Action at 4)--therefore, Applicant does not know what the objection to the drawings is. Clarification of the objection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all claims are in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees, including extension of time fees, and/or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-1504 (SHL.0190US).

Respectfully submitted,

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